

# LEWIS MECHAM AND WIVES, VASTIA EMILY JOHNSON AND ESTHER HERBERT



Lewis Mecham was born December 18, 1835, at Mercer, Pa., the son of Ephraim Mecham and Polly Derby. With his parents he lived through all the trials in Missouri and during the trek to Utah. He married Vastia Emily Johnson, daughter of Luke Johnson and Susan Pettitt, Salt Lake City, Utah. She was born September 4, 1842 at Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio. She died January 19, 1865, at Rush Valley, Tooele County, Utah. Lewis later married Esther Herbert. She was born February 12, 1851 at Mitchel-Troy, Monmouth, England, a daughter of Thomas Roland Herbert and Esther Lewis. Lewis Mecham died October 14, 1907, and Esther April 19, 1934, both at Wallsburg and they are both buried there.

Lewis and Vastia Mecham came West in 1862 by ox team and settled in Rush Valley with a Johnson family. Here their son Lewis Lafayette Mecham was born on September 30, 1862. Vastia died in 1865. In the spring, Lewis saddled up his horse and with his earthly belongings and his 2 and a half year old son, Lewis "Lafaye" behind him on the saddle, he rode into Provo to his parents' home. They all moved to Wallsburg shortly after.

Here Lewis met Esther Herbert, who was to become his second wife. She was 18½ years old when they were married. They settled on a little farm in Wallsburg. Pre-emption rights were given first, later homestead rights. They homesteaded a farm on Provo River also. This site is under the

Deer Creek Reservoir now. The place on the Provo River had a little lake on it called Lewis Lake, after Lewis Mecham. Esther took "Lafaye" and mothered him as her own. They had a large family and many trials and tribulations, but the Lord blessed them mightily.

When Esther Herbert arrived with her mother, Esther Lewis Herbert, in Wallsburg, they lived in a small fort at the head of spring, so they could use the beautiful clear water. This was for protection from Indians.

After her marriage to Lewis Mecham, their first home was made of cottonwood logs with a dirt floor. The only window was a log that was left out during the day to let the light in. It was put back in place at night to keep the cold out. The fireplace, used for cooking and heating, was made of rocks. Later Lewis Mecham built a large granary and they moved into this. When he threshed he had a bin for the grain in one end of the granary. They built their beds on top of the bin, using mattresses of straw. They also used pillows and feather beds filled with wild duck feathers. One time they had a "bad year," so had to take the straw out of the mattresses to feed the livestock.

Esther was terribly frightened of Indians. When they were living on the Provo River and Lewis had to be away from home, she would take the small children and go up in the foothills until Lewis came home. One day the Indians came into her home and caught her by surprise. The collar of her garments was sticking up above her dress. The Indians, seeing this, said, "Mormon, Mormon," and went away without harming her in any way.

Esther had a very patient disposition. After they were grown, all her children used to go home to visit "mother" on Sunday. While the older folks visited, the grandchildren built playhouses in the willows along the creek. None will ever forget Grandma Esther's good bread, butter and currant jelly sandwiches and her special "English tea biscuits."

During her last few years she lost her eyesight. She was always very patient about it while she had to sit in her big leather-covered rocking chair, until she died when 83 years old.

and counselor to her 22 years. He was set apart as a prophet. Each Sunday the family would go up to grandma's home to hold their prayer circle. Grandma's name was Mecham Smith. The room was never used for anything else, and she lived there later in life. She was just a little bit of a young girl, but she always seemed to be a prophet.

Lewis Mecham was a veteran of the Indian wars. When Lewis and Esther were going to live on the Provo River, the Indians came and started to run them off. Lewis was surprised and he was stuck, sticking his head out. He was conscious for quite a while, but he never was well after that accident. He had a cerebral hemorrhage. He lived in service to the Lord and was always an example to his children and associates.

Their children: Luke Rollin Orsen, Esther Polly, George Fayette, Emma Naomi, Ephraim L., Sarah E., Marquis Herbert, Mary Elvira, Gib Ann, Pamela Vilas, Bernet Rurion and Alice Marinda.

MECHAM, LEWIS (son of Ephraim Mecham and Polly Derby). Came to Utah 1862, oxteam company.

Married Vasta Johnson (daughter of Luke Johnson). Their child: Lafayette (deceased), m. Sarah Ann Richens.

Married Ester Herbert. Their children: Luke R.; Polly Esther; Orson; George Fayette, m. Ida Viola Boren; Emma Naomi; Ephraim Liberty; Marquis Herbert; Mary; Gib Ami; Burnet; Alice. Family home Wallsburg, Utah.

Seventy; second counselor to Bishop Fraghton at Wallsburg, Utah. Veteran of the Black Hawk and the Walker Indian wars, and also took part in the Johnston army trouble. Farmer. Died Oct. 14, 1907.

MECHAM, LEWIS (son of Ephraim Mecham and Polly Derby). Came to Utah 1862, oxteam company.

Married Vasta Johnson (daughter of Luke Johnson). Their child: Lafayette (deceased), m. Sarah Ann Richens.

Married Ester Herbert. Their children: Luke R.; Polly Esther; Orson; George Fayette, m. Ida Viola Boren; Emma Naomi; Ephraim Liberty; Marquis Herbert; Mary; Gib Ami; Burnet; Alice. Family home Wallsburg, Utah.

Seventy; second counselor to Bishop Fraghton at Wallsburg, Utah. Veteran of the Black Hawk and the Walker Indian wars, and also took part in the Johnston army trouble. Farmer. Died Oct. 14, 1907. 1030